



QCWA HOT-LINE REPORT

April - June 1998

Volume 20, No. 2

Headquarters

The last few months here in Eugene has been rather hectic, what with the ballot preparation, getting material down to the editor of the Journal and, in general, cleaning out files that we no longer need.

A project has been started that I want to share with all of you. We have ten file drawers filled with bound series of membership applications from the very beginning down to the last one received after Dayton which was 29,463. That is a great deal of space devoted to 'old' applications, but we do need them and we do have occasions to refer to them every once in a while. I finally found a program which will scan these applications and make an excellent copy so we can file them electronically. This program is by Xerox and is called Pagis Pro and is capable of reading both printed and written word and making a very good file of that form. The file is a graphic format, but within the program can be converted to a file suitable for a word processor or publication, if you so desire. The first 600 applications are bound in two binders, measuring 8 1/2 by 11 inches by 2 inches thick. That amount is now stored on six floppy disks. Shortly after June 1st I will install a writable CD-ROM drive in my computer and we will store these files on a CD-ROM disk. It appears that we will be able to store the entire 29,000 files on two CD-ROM disks. When this is done we have recovered 10 file drawers which we can use for other purposes. Since I will have my original ROM drive in the machine we will be able to duplicate the disks for proper storage.

Our first 5000 applications have been photo copied from the originals and because of the copying have to be edited after they are scanned, and prior to storing them into a file. After that time, it will be quicker to do the scanning and subsequent storage.

This could have some great ramifications. For instance we could supply the directory on a CD-ROM disk which would be so much more economical. We will have to wait for everyone to catch up, however, but that will happen with time. Also, we could supply the QCWA Journal on a ROM disk, and what a savings that would be.

Call Signs

One of the frequent requests is to search the Callbook for a name because they cannot remember their first call. Personally, I cannot understand someone, twenty-five years ago, working to get their license and not being able to remember their call. Gosh, that is like forgetting your name, to me. Sadly, we have to turn down those requests. First there are only two of us in the office and that type of search takes time. Secondly, the darn print is so small that your eyeballs burn after a period of time. I had one close in member ask to find a name, so I invited him to come to the office. We gave him the desk in the back room, a magnifying glass and the callbook. About two hours later he came out, a silly smile on his face and said, "I understand, now, why you invited me to do this." To top it off, he did not find what he was looking for. So, if you hear stories about our NOT finding a name in the Callbook, you will understand.

Applications

I am just back from Dayton and a number of items have been referred to me by Jan about our use of the applications. First, we have three applications, one for Domestic use, and one for Canada and one for Overseas prospects to use. We have the Canada and Overseas applications as a direct result of their requests. The main reason is cost and the inability to read our language on the part of most of the overseas people. So we honored that request and made changes in the fee schedule. If you use the wrong application then we have to carry on correspondence with the prospect, explain the situation and hopefully get it resolved. At Dayton, this year, we had a number of people that we are probably going to lose because of wrong apps and/or not eligible.

On the application is a place to insert the original call and hopefully a date when that first license was granted. We MUST have that information, especially when we have to use the callbooks in lieu of other supporting evidence of the first date of licensing. When we do not have that evidence our information from the callbook can be off as much as one year, depending upon when you were licensed and when the next printing of the callbook took place. The responsibility is upon the applicant and when that is not supplied and we have to use the callbook, later on some people get rather irate that we have then shy one year. When they did nothing to provide 'proof'.

One other thing that gets overlooked is an item of \$3.00 which is a one time charge to a new member to 'set up' the files. This has been going along for years and I see no reason to change it. We experience this lack of \$3.00 in many applications, which then results in a delay while messages are passed back and forth.

BBS

Just a quick note to advise that with the posting of the new members list on the BBS June 1, 1998 that will be the last time we utilize that service for the new member listing. It will then be posted each month, as it is now, on the home page. We have reached a point where we have perhaps two people obtaining the information from the BBS each month so I have decided to stop that service and probably use that computer for something that is more productive. We will maintain the FAX on that second line.

Vanity Call Signs

When you order certificates or have questions about your chapter members, please give us their call as well as their name. We have found that it is very important to match names with calls. If we have both, then the chance of an error is minimized. Generally, we file by call sign for that is unique for each member. The database is organized in that manner. We can, however, check by name in case you send us an incorrect call sign. In this day and age the chance of an error is great. So, please give us a name and a call when you need information.



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The Xtal Set Society

We get a lot of requests for information on a lot of subjects. Some we can answer, others I know where they can find out what they want to know, and then, some other questions are just plain difficult to provide proper answers. One of the frequently asked questions is a "where can I find out about Xystal sets?" and now I have a great answer for them.

There is a group called the Xystal Set Society. Their address is PO Box 3026, St Louis, MO, 63130 and a membership with mailings of their excellent newsletter is \$19.95 for two years. The newsletter is filled with projects, comments from members and a great deal of historical information.

Recently I received their latest publication, Crystal Set Building and more, Volume 6 and 7. It carries a price of \$15.95 plus \$2.50 for shipping and is well worth the investment. Here is an excellent reference volume for your library. You might even find it worth while to introduce some younger people to the fun of crystal sets. Frequently they list sources of hard to find materials for construction projects and the prices are very reasonable.

This particular volume has numerous articles about some rather advanced projects and the solutions to the challenges the authors set forth to start with. Subjects are "An FM Xtal set", "A Crystal Headphone from a Cat Food Can", "From Crystal Set to Superhete", and then the "Simple TRF Set" and so on throughout the index. I think you will find some fun reading and you might even do a little construction.

Try out the Xtal Set Society, I think you will enjoy it very much. The nostalgia is really there and you see it all through the book. They also have a great internet site, which you might like to browse. The address is www.midnightscience.com. There is a copy of the newsletter and plans for projects along with vintage articles from the 1920's and 1930's. There is even a specialty bookstore, MidnightScience Books.

Jim Walsh, W7LVN

Zip + Four

I do want to thank all those good members that responded and gave us their +four for their ZIP codes. When you are mailing material to 9000 members it becomes pretty important that you have the proper information. When we started with the mailing program we had over 350 addresses that we could not obtain +four numbers for from the USPS CD-ROM disk. We have to be able to produce the +four from that disk in order to attain our certification for the mailing. The number has now been reduced down to 131 that we have a problem with. In checking, one by one, against the disk I find that unless we have N or S, a St or CT, we cannot get a match in about 30 of these cases. Those people I have written to asking if they would confirm the street address. Sure, we mail with the addresses we have and you get the mail. That is because the postperson knows where you are and delivers. However, when you are

doing this on a bulk mail basis, you must have the correct address. The bottom line is that when we mail the Journal we save lots of dollars if we have the correct address. The cost for a Journal, first class is about \$1.50, doing it bulk the cost is 0.188 to 0.235. Multiply by several thousand and you can approximate some differences that we can save.

Election

The ballots have gone out and I hear from various areas that they have arrived and are being returned. I do hope that we see a better return from our members even though there is not much choice for you, the member, it would be an indication of support for the Board members. This year we have a number of positions that will be filled with brand new members since a number of former BOD decided they had served long enough. The ballot will close at midnight July 31, 1998 and the Tellers will report to Headquarters and I will then announce it on the QCWA net (14347) on Sunday August 2, 1998. That same report will appear in the Fall Journal which will be mailed in September and show the numbers voting. As soon as I hear from the Tellers, a telephone call will be made to each candidate advising them of the results. Urge your members to vote, or at least remind them to vote.

T shirts

A couple years ago we made contact with a chap who does logos on T-shirts. In fact he brought one to me at that Dayton event and we tentatively made arrangements to advertise and make them available to our members. Then, do to some problems, he did not answer. We now have made contact, he is back in business and doing very well and we are going to handle T-shirts again.

His T-shirt has the greatest logo applied that I have ever seen. There are two layers. The basic outline is a deep blue in color, with a yellow overlay that is a heavier material. It is very detailed, carefully applied and just looks wonderful. The nicest part of all this is we will advertise them and when the orders come in we will transmit them along with a mailing label and he will make them and mail to the member directly from his shop. We will not have to stock them here at Headquarters.

While we work out the details, one of our members is now on his fourth washing machine cycle and the applied logo is still holding up very well.

There will also be a polo type shirt available with a smaller logo where the pocket would normally be and the samples we saw were very well done.



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Pictures

Some of our members have sent Headquarters some great colored and black and white pictures as files taken with their digital cameras. Locally a number of our people have been exploring the subject of digital cameras but to really do a good job we felt there had to be a better way since we already had some very expensive and good cameras.

One member found an excellent camera store in S. California and was introduced to a Print Scanner that also scans negatives and slides with great resolution. There are several brands out there in the market place but we settled on a HP Photo Scanner which is just under \$400. That along with a good color printer almost makes up for what we had to do entirely in the darkroom not too many years ago. The software that comes with the scanner allows you to crop, maneuver the subject, adjust the brightness etc, and to save it to a file, or place it into another program or make a print of the file.

Using your good camera, shoot regular color film and take it to a 'one hour' developing shop. Almost all of them use the same process and equipment. Ask for developing only and do not cut the film. One hour later you pay your \$2.00 and go home to your scanner and printer. Make your files and/or your prints and get them to your friends or into publications. The results are well worth the activity you go through and you have them in a very short time and the results are just what you want. If you have a good, sharp negative you can have equally good sharp prints.

So, scan your negatives (for the Chapter, of course) and send us the files as an attachment to your e-mail message. I prefer the .JPG files as they maintain all the good quality of the original. The average 35mm negative produces a scanned file of about 200,000 bytes.

Recently my #3 child helped produce a new granddaughter for our family and less than 24 hours later relatives from Russia to Japan, and from Canada to California had pictures in their possession via e-mail. I have scanned a couple of chapter pictures and sent those down to the editor for the Journal. It works great.

A Big Problem

A number of Chapters have experienced a problem with membership. Especially is this evident with some members who are eligible for QCWA membership, wish to attend and who may or may not contribute to the Chapter and its expenses. Now, this is fine for the person who wishes to be with his/her peers and is not eligible for QCWA. Take them in; let them pay a subscription fee, or whatever you wish to call it, they just cannot vote or hold office.

The other people are generally people who have not renewed their dues and still attend the meetings and in a few cases have been elected to office in the Chapter. If the later has taken place, then the Secretary receives a letter about the lapsed membership and things get taken care of quickly. In the former situation it becomes a guideline that you should adopt. If that

person is eligible for QCWA membership then they cannot really be a participating member of the Chapter. After all QCWA provides the basis for the establishment of the Chapter system and they should not be allowed to freeload upon the membership. Your active members pay for the privilege of Chapter membership by maintaining their National membership and they support the Chapter.

A number of Chapters have had to face this problem and we have talked about it with their officers. The above suggestion has been used and is quite effective and is proper to carry out.

Suggestion

When you buy a new piece of amateur radio equipment the dealer will frequently ask you how you learned about their product. Do you want to drive them mad? Tell them you saw the material in the QCWA Journal. They will go nuts trying to find out when they purchased advertising in the Journal. We might just obtain a few new advertisers over the long run doing this. Within space constraints we are always looking for a little bit of advertising revenue to help support the expense of the Journal. Give it a try. Tell your Chapter members about this.

Finally

Requests still come in for "Care packages" for ham fests and you are doing a good job with these. Frequently the people merely want some handouts, and we can take care of these requests with materials we now have and are developing. Just let us know about it as early as possible so we can get it there in time.

The Blind cassette program is still going very well but we are not certain we have found all of our blind members. Take a look at the membership of your Chapter. On the list of members in your Chapter, which you receive in December each year, under the "S" column if there is a "B" in front of a members name, that is the code that places him on the list for the tape. Let us know if you have someone that should be listed, and we will take care of it immediately.

On the Scholarship program, there are still people out there who think we carry the applications at Headquarters. That is not so. The applicant must request a package from:

FAR Scholarships
6903 Rhode Island Ave
College Park, MD, 20740.

Specify that it is for a QCWA Scholarship. Even if they do not receive a QCWA Scholarship they are eligible for a lot of other scholarships through the FAR program.

Jim Walsh, W7LVN

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